

Americas / Europe

1. FRANCE: DAESH-inspired propaganda incites attacks against French protesters

Source: Open Sources;

Summary: According to open source reporting from late November 2018, DAESH-aligned groups issued posters inciting lone-actors to attack the "yellow vest" movement protesters in Paris. One media group, al-Irhab Media Foundation, called on attackers to capitalize on the ongoing demonstrations and "kill the disbelievers", displaying in a single image including knives, vehicles, guns and incendiary devices. Another group, "Just Terror" published a series of five posters, each displaying French text warning of and inciting attacks.¹



Source: SITE Intelligence Group

According to open sources, the "yellow vest" movement is protesting high gas prices and the rising cost of living in France, culminating in three weeks of protests in mid-November to early-December 2018. While the movement was initially peaceful, two successive weekends have seen rioting in Paris. Several social media posts are urging more demonstrations, starting 2018 12 08.²

¹ "Two IS-aligned groups call lone-wolf jihadists to capitalize on protests in Paris and attack", *SITE Intelligence Group*, 2018 11 26

² "Yellow vest' protesters 'feel ridiculed by Macron's u-turn to delay fuel tax increase", *France 24*, 2018 12 05

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<https://www.france24.com/en/20181205-yellow-vest-protesters-macron-philippe-fuel-tax-increasefrance>

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LIVE

'Yellow vest' protesters feel ridiculed' by Macron's U-turn to delay fuel tax increase

Pascal Rossingol, Reuters | A protester wearing a yellow vest, the symbol of a French drivers' protest against higher diesel fuel prices, holds a flag near burning debris at the approach to a motorway in Fontaine-Notre-Dame, France, December 4, 2018.

Text by:FRANCE 24

Video by:Alison SARGENT

French prime minister Édouard Philippe announced on Tuesday that the government would postpone a controversial fuel tax hike, but analysts say that this is unlikely to stem 'yellow vest' protesters' anger

ADVERTISING

Philippe announced a suspension of planned increases in three taxes on fuel for a six-month period in response to nationwide protests against high pump prices and rising living costs.

Along with this delay to the tax increases that were set for January, Philippe said the time would be used to discuss other measures to help the working poor and squeezed middle-class who rely on vehicles to get to work and go shopping.

The measures will cost around 2 billion euros (\$2.3 billion), but will be offset by corresponding spending cuts, a government source said.

The last rocky six months of Macron's term

That is while government spokesperson Benjamin Griveaux said on Wednesday that French President Macron's administration is also open to reversing its cuts to a wealth tax, another source of grievance for protesters. "If a measure that we have taken, which is costing the public money, turns out not to be working, if it's not going well, we're not stupid - we would change it," he told RTL radio.

'The French don't want crumbs, they want a baguette'

Despite having no leader and sometimes unclear goals, the yellow vests movement has spread from protests over fuel tax increases to a broader uprising against Macron, who has been nicknamed "president of the rich".

While the 'yellow vest' movement was mostly peaceful to begin with, the past two weekends have seen outpourings of violence and rioting in Paris, with extreme far-right and far-left factions joining the demos.

On Saturday, the Arc de Triomphe national monument was set on fire and avenues off the Champs Élysées were damaged. Cars, buildings and some cafés were torched.

Over the past two days, ambulance drivers and students have joined in and launched their own protests.

Two unions, CGT and FO, called lorry drivers to start a strike from December 9 while several Facebook pages were also urging new rounds of demonstrations for next Saturday.

FRANCE 24 International Affairs Editor Philip Turle gives his analysis

After three weeks of rising frustration, there was little sign Philippe's measures would placate the "yellow vests".

"The French don't want crumbs, they want a baguette," 'yellow vest' spokesman Benjamin Cauchy told French news channel BFM, adding that the movement called for a cancellation of the taxes. Another protester, Christophe Chalencon, was more blunt: "We're being taken for idiots," he told Reuters, using a stronger expletive.

"I would say that 99 percent of the 'yellow vests' who spoke on French media yesterday were saying that this is definitely not enough, that whatever the prime minister announced on Tuesday, he could have gone a lot further," said FRANCE 24 French Affairs Editor Philip Turle.

"There was one word that really ruined it all for the protesters, and that was 'postponement'," Turle continued. "I think that's where the protesters feel they have been ridiculed by Macron. So they're saying: we're not going to take our yellow vests off, we're going to leave them on, because in six months we're going to be coming back again."

"At best, Philippe's announcement is a temporary fix for one of the questions that the movement's about," added Oliver Davis, a professor of French politics at the University of Warwick, in an interview with FRANCE 24. "I don't think it's going to be enough to stem the protests."

'I don't think it's going to be enough to stem the protests'

Le Pen, Trump chip in

Macron came to office in mid-2017 promising to overhaul the economy, revitalise growth and draw foreign investment by making the nation a more attractive place to do business.

For the self-declared "Jupiterian" president, who is sharply down in the polls and struggling to regain the initiative, a further risk is how opposition parties leverage the anger and the decision to shift course.

Ahead of European Parliament elections next May, support for the far-right under Marine Le Pen and the far-left of Jean-Luc Mélenchon has been rising. Macron has cast those elections as a battle between his "progressive" ideas and what he sees as their promotion of nationalist or anti-EU agendas.

Le Pen was quick to point out that the six-month postponement of the fuel-tax increases took the decision beyond the European elections.

She was not the only right-wing populist to take a swipe at Macron over the 'yellow vest' protesters.

"I am glad that my friend @EmmanuelMacron and the protesters in Paris have agreed with the conclusion I reached two years ago," US President Donald Trump tweeted late on Tuesday.

"The Paris Agreement is fatally flawed because it raises the price of energy for responsible countries while whitewashing some of the worst polluters," said Trump, referring to a global deal on the environment drafted in Paris in late 2015. Macron's proposed fuel tax hikes are aimed at encouraging motorists to switch from petrol and diesel cars to more ecologically-friendly alternatives.

(FRANCE 24 with REUTERS and AFP)

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WEEKLY THREAT REVIEW

ITAC

Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre

CIET

Centre intégré d'évaluation du terrorisme

WTR 18/49-E // 2018-12-06

TOP SECRET

CANADIAN EYES ONLY

Week: 2018 11 29 to 2018 12 05

AMERICAS / EUROPE

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6. **FRANCE:** DAESH-inspired propaganda incites attacks against French protesters

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7. **IRAN:** Suicide attack in Chabahar kills four policemen

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Veuillez noter que les informations et les renseignements figurant dans le présent Examen hebdomadaire de la menace ne sont présentés que dans la langue dans laquelle ils ont été transmis au CIET. Par contre, les remarques et les analyses du CIET sont présentées dans les deux langues officielles.

5. ITALY: Authorities foil biological attack plot, possibly inspired by DAESH

Source: Open sources

Summary: According to open sources, on 2018 11 28, Italian authorities in Sardinia announced that they had arrested Amin Alhaj Ahmad, a 38-year-old Lebanese national, on suspicion of planning a chemical or biological attack in Italy. Citing the police, media sources reported that Ahmad had researched the potential use of the aflatoxin B1 carcinogen and the methomyl pesticide, while others stated that he had researched the biological agents ricin and anthrax. Local media sources have also described Ahmad as a DAESH-affiliate; however, there was no evidence of direct contact with the group. Ahmed's plans appeared to have been in their early stages, and there was no indication that an attack was imminent. Ahmad's unnamed cousin had also reportedly been arrested in Lebanon on suspicion of planning to poison army water supplies.

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7. Iran: Suicide attack in Chabahar kills four policemen

Source: Open sources

Summary: According to open sources, on 2018 12 06, Ansar al-Furqan claimed responsibility for the suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) attack against a police headquarters in Chabahar, Sistan and Baluchestan province, Iran. In its claim, Ansar al-Furqan remarked that the "Iranian government and their media attempting to brush off this defeat and not willing to declare the outcomes this operation. We wish to say we will always be side by side of the Iranian people against this tyrannical regime". Media reporting indicates that the Iranian police stopped the VBIED and began firing at the driver when the vehicle detonated, killing at least four policemen and injuring 42 others. 1

The last attack claimed by Ansar al-Furqan was the December 2017 attack against an oil pipeline in the Khuzestan province which intended "to inflict losses on the economy of criminal Iranian regime".



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THREAT LEVEL // DEFINITIONS

Established Raised Lowered Remains

CRITICAL

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **HIGHLY LIKELY** and **COULD OCCUR IMMINENTLY**.

HIGH

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **LIKELY**.

MEDIUM

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism **COULD OCCUR**.

LOW

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY**.

VERY LOW

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **HIGHLY UNLIKELY**.

ITAC uses both quantitative and qualitative analysis in applying terrorism threat levels. The setting of threat levels is determined by several factors including current intelligence, recent events, as well as the intent, capabilities, and attack frequency of terrorist groups. ITAC cautions that the information may be incomplete and, regardless of the threat level applied, a violent act of terrorism may occur with little or no warning.

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